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**Implementation Advisory Group Call Minutes**  
**Wednesday, December 18, 2019**  
**1:00 p.m. Eastern**

**Participants:** Sarah Ohlhorst and John Courtney, American Society for Nutrition (ASN); Cathie Woteki; Regan Bailey; Rob Bertolo; Jamie Baum

**Use and Definition of “Entities at Interest”**

The Advisory Group further discussed use of the term “entities at interest”. At interest was defined in the report as “when a financial interest exists in a project’s/activity’s outcome or resolution of an issue to be addressed”. The Implementation Advisory Group discussed the types of members or groups that this term might address, including but not limited to industry associations, trade associations, commodity groups, public/private partnerships, other scientific societies, as well as individuals. Such a term essentially could cover anyone and everyone, which may be viewed as too broad and irrelevant, although a narrower term may leave out important groups/individuals, while seeming to target others. The group discussed a financial and/or commercial interest and what that entails, including the producing, marketing, selling and so on of any product, service, event, etc. The group reviewed the terms and definitions used by other societies on this subject that had been shared for review. The intent of Recommendation 1 was also discussed (*development of a rigorous, transparent approach to co-sponsoring and managing all activities financially supported by “entities and/or individuals at interest”*) to focus on co-sponsored and managed activities or projects, and felt that it is better to keep the term broad, as the potential for conflict could always arise for nearly any member or group.

**Conflict of Interest Disclosure**

The Committee discussed Conflict of Interest disclosure statements (Recommendation 6) and that similar government COI forms include immediate family members. It was noted that ASN’s current COI form also notes family members. The Group discussed ASN’s policy for reviewing and filing COI disclosure statements, and noted that moving forward ASN should include a PDF copy of its disclosure statement online along with the process ASN utilizes to review, file and update COI forms and to mitigate potential COIs for ASN leadership, staff and volunteer members.

**Action:** Sarah Ohlhorst will share ASN’s current COI form with the Advisory Group for review.

**Guiding Principles for ASN Relationships**

The Advisory Group discussed the example guidelines for co-sponsored activities/projects used by other societies. The group felt the example guidelines shared were appropriate models for ASN to consider and also suggested that ASN review any guidelines in use by: other FASEB societies particularly the Endocrine Society, American Society of Human Genetics, and the

American Association of Immunologists, the American Medical Association, Institute of Food Technologists, American Diabetes Association, American Chemical Society, and the American Society for Microbiology. It was also suggested that ASN line up conversations with staff from the American Heart Association in particular, and perhaps other organizations, to discuss how they developed and how they implement their current policies.

**Action:** Sarah will look for additional policies in use by the suggested organizations and share these with Group members for consideration by ASN. Sarah will also schedule a discussion with AHA staff.

### **Charge for Independent ASN Partnerships Advisory Group and Membership Criteria**

*Proposed Charge:* The independent advisory group to oversee ASN relationships with entities at interest will:

- 1 Review ~~and approve~~ the management approach ASN intends to use to minimize bias and enhance transparency regarding activities financially supported by “entities and/or individuals at interest” on an annual basis **and advise the ASN Board of Directors of any concerns.**
- 2 Review ~~and approve~~ ASN’s guidelines for avoiding [financial] conflicts of interest on an annual basis **and advise the ASN Board of Directors of any concerns.**
- 3 Review ASN’s annual audit to ensure compliance with the guidelines and management approach **and advise the ASN Board of Directors of any concerns.**
- 4 Provide periodic recommendations to the ASN BOD for changes and modifications to the guidelines and management approach as the environment evolves.

The Advisory Group suggested the changes noted above to the potential charge for the independent advisory group that will oversee ASN’s relationships with entities at interest.

As ASN considers members for the independent advisory group to oversee ASN relationships with entities at interest, it was noted that they must be completely independent of ASN (i.e., *not* ASN members). The Implementation Advisory Group felt it would be important for this group to include a member of the public, as they are a target demographic of these recommendations to instill better trust in nutrition science. This oversight group should include professionals who are aware of not-for-profit operating practices, convening big tent organizations such as ASN that brings together many diverse viewpoints, and those who have successful experience in transparently managing not-for-profit activities, including those financially supported by “entities and/or individuals at interest”. Subjects useful for group members to have expertise in include law, ethics, and accounting. It was also suggested that an at-large ASN member be available to consult with this group in order to advise them of any situations or issues specific to the field of nutrition science and to answer any questions that they may have, alongside ASN staff. The Implementation Advisory Group noted that the role of this group is one of oversight, providing recommendations and advice to the ASN Board of Directors, not an auditing role.

### **Next Steps**

The next Implementation Advisory Group call will be scheduled for mid-January.